

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 14, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

As negotiations over the omnibus for FY2018 agreement continue, we write to urge you to block any funding for President Trump's military parade.

Recent reports suggest that the Department of Defense is complying with President Trump's request for a "parade like the one in France" by holding an event in Washington, DC on Veterans Day of this year. To meet the President's need for overt displays of power and opulence, the parade will reportedly involve period uniforms and a heavy air presence. Out of deference to the infrastructure of the city, the Pentagon is unable to fulfill the president's request for tanks, but will supply ample wheeled vehicles.



We share the Pentagon's intention of honoring our military veterans and their many contributions to our country, but we respectfully argue that the cost and visuals of such a parade simply go too far. Estimates of the cost range from \$3 million to \$50 million; Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Mick Mulvaney recently estimated a \$30 million price tag. Instead of spending money on a one-day event, we should be funding programs to address the needs of those currently serving, our veterans, and military families.

Beyond costs, we are also concerned with the visuals of a military parade happening at the behest of the president. The true strength of this country lies in its ability to unite and persuade through diplomacy, engaging with our friends and allies abroad. We do not need to throw a parade to display our strength to satiate one man's ego. We should instead invest our time and energy in rebuilding our depleted diplomatic capacities which have been systematically exhausted under the current administration.

Save the period uniforms until every veteran has a job, a home, and sufficient health care. Save the flyovers for the day that the military is able to raise the pay and benefits of our service members while easing the transition into civilian life through education and job opportunities. Save the parades for the day that we reaffirm our commitment to peace, diplomacy, and human rights, at home and abroad.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask that you support language in the final omnibus agreement that prevents funds from being used for President Trump's military parade.

Sincerely,


Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress
Mark Pocan
Member of Congress
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

cc: Chairman Cochran, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Member Lowey